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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this guide is to assist school districts that might wish to form a consortium in understanding how to do so, how to decide which activities to undertake, and how to ensure success for the consortium. The ideas and suggestions contained in the guide come primarily from the 17 program improvement consortia in operation during the 1978-79 school year and from the state department of education and county office staff members who worked with them. The program improvement consortia are clusters of school districts working together to provide leadership and support for the schools in their districts that are involved in the process of improving programs for their students. A listing of the consortia operating during the 1980-81 school year is presented in an appendix. (Author/IRT)

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Assistance Guide for Forming a Consortium to Improve School Programs

Revised Edition

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CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Wilson Riles, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Sacramento, 1981

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†Also available in Spanish, at the price indicated.
*Developed for implementation of AB 65.

Preface

This *Assistance Guide for Forming a Consortium to Improve School Programs* was designed to be used by school districts that are exploring ways to improve and/or extend the services currently being provided their schools, by districts that are thinking about becoming a member of a program improvement consortium, and also by the members of established program improvement consortia.

The guide describes what a program improvement consortium is, how it is formed, how it might determine and carry out consortium activities, and how other agencies work to assist and support consortia. The description of the consortium builds on the experiences and knowledge of those district representatives that were members of program improvement consortia during the 1978-79 school year as well as Department of Education personnel and staff members of offices of county superintendents of schools that worked with consortia; however, the description does not reflect adequately the enthusiasm of member districts for program improvement consortia nor for the benefits from consortium activities that they see or experience at the school site level. Therefore, it is recommended that any reader of this guide who is interested in learning more about program improvement consortia talk to a member of one or more of the consortia listed in Appendix A.

If there are any questions about this guide or program improvement consortia in general, please call a member of the Consortia Support Unit at (916) 323-6151: Karen Olsen, Manager; Vivian Ford, Consultant; June Rice, Consultant; Barbara Sandman, Consultant; and Vivian Silver, Consultant.

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Introduction

What Is a Consortium to Improve School Programs?

Program improvement consortia are clusters of school districts working together to provide leadership and support for the schools in their districts, from prekindergarten through the twelfth grade, that are involved in the process of improving programs for their students.

Through working together, districts in consortia are establishing school-to-school and district-to-district communication networks for identifying the needs of schools and for sharing experiences, ideas, and resources to assist schools in resolving those needs. The activities of a consortium are those which the consortium deems most effective in supporting each school in each phase of its program improvement cycle. The activities to support the schools typically include assistance in school-level planning, reviewing school plans, sharing the results of the plan review with the school, helping the school translate its plan into action, providing staff and help in curriculum development in priority areas, helping identify and providing resources for program assistance designed to meet the needs identified in the school plan during program review, and so forth. Districts in a consortium also provide mutual support in the development of district master plans.

Since the member districts comprising each consortium for improving school programs have unique needs, strengths, interests, and styles of operating, the way consortium activities are conducted varies from consortium to consortium. But the purpose of program improvement consortia is common among all consortia; that is, to support and assist each school as it strives to develop and maintain a high quality program for each student, and in so doing, to maximize the resources available to the schools from the districts, individually and collectively.

When assistance at each of the steps in the program improvement cycle is provided locally, schools within consortia benefit in a number of ways. Especially important is continuity in planning and carrying out support services. When such assistance is designed by people who are close to and knowledgeable about the school, the assistance can be precise in meeting the priority needs of each school and in preparing the school for carrying out and following up on each step in the program improvement process.

While the focus of consortia activities is on schools using the consolidated application, all schools within consortia can benefit from participation in the program improvement activities of the consortia.

Why Form a Consortium?

In the fall of 1979, representatives from the 17 program improvement consortia that were functioning during the 1978-79 school year met with State Department of Education staff members to discuss their experiences as consortia members. They discussed why they formed a consortium, what benefits their districts and schools received from consortium activities, how they formed their consortia, and how they managed the work of the consortium.

When asked, "Why did you become interested in a consortium?" they responded:

- We were looking for some mutual support in our program improvement efforts.
- We wanted some new, fresh ideas based on what works at other schools.
- We started sharing information among schools in our district, grew to doing mock reviews, then suddenly found that we were ready to do program reviews with other districts and to give each other program support; we were becoming a program improvement consortium.
- We felt that our staffs would benefit through extensive involvement in program review and plan review training.
- We didn't want to be out there all by ourselves.
- We're a small district and we wanted some new resources.

Once the districts became members of consortia, they found that the benefits to their schools were more extensive than they had anticipated. In discussing the benefits of participation in consortia, the members of the group listed the following:

- The consortium is a support group for dealing with program improvement activities at both district and school levels.
- The involvement of greater numbers of teachers, aides, administrators, board members, parents, and secondary students in program planning, implementation, and evaluation increased local ownership of programs.
- Because more people are trained to review plans and programs, program development assistance can be provided to more schools.

- More resources in greater variety are available to schools for follow-up implementation of program and plan review recommendations.
- There can be greater flexibility in carrying out the steps of the improvement process.
- The people who review the school plans and programs are more knowledgeable about the districts and their schools and can make recommendations for improvement that are more helpful to the schools.
- All schools in a district reap the benefits of greater district involvement in and understanding of planning, implementation, and evaluation procedures, and of having a resource bank of local people trained in these improvement processes.

The purpose of this *Assistance Guide for Forming a Consortium to Improve School Programs* is to assist school districts that might wish to form a consortium in understanding how to do so, how to decide which activities to undertake, and how to ensure success for the consortium. The ideas and suggestions contained within this guide came primarily from the experiences of the 17 program improvement consortia in operation during the 1978-79 school year and of the State Department of Education and county office staff members who worked with them.

Considering Membership in a Consortium

Early in the process of considering whether or not to participate with other districts as a consortium member, a school district should review past and current program improvement efforts and activities, assess how effective they have been, and identify those factors which have contributed to the present state of the school programs. School site council, school advisory council, and/or bilingual education committee members should be involved in this review as well as district office personnel, board members, school staff members, other parents and community members, and students in secondary schools.

In reviewing past and present improvement efforts, the district should attempt to find answers to questions like the following:

- What are the expectations of our community for our schools?
- How well do we understand what the program at each school is planned to accomplish?
- What kinds of support have we been giving schools in planning and implementing effective programs, including those funded by school improvement, ESEA Title I, state compensatory education, and providing those services to limited- and nonEnglish-speaking students?
- What resources within the district are available to help us plan, implement, and evaluate programs, and how well have we used them?
- What kinds of self-evaluation processes have we used, and how have we used the results of these processes?
- How well have our schools used program review and other kinds of evaluation findings as a basis for making changes in their school plans and programs?
- How effectively have we at the district level used program review, plan review, and other evaluation findings to determine what assistance should be provided to the schools?
- How effective and complete is communication between the district office and our schools?
- How much sharing of information and resources is there among our schools?
- What special needs have we identified in our school programs? What specific strengths?

After the district has reviewed the effectiveness of its program improvement activities, the needs and strengths of the school programs, and the availability of necessary resources, the next step is to consider how participation in a consortium could help make current program improvement efforts more effective at the school sites. In other words, what benefits would the district and the schools within the district derive from participation in a program improvement consortium?

The final and most important step for a district to take in considering whether or not to become a member of a program improvement consortium is to determine whether it is ready to accept the additional degree of responsibility for the success of its program improvement efforts that accompanies increased local ownership of those processes and the ways in which they are practiced.

Once the district has decided that membership in a consortium would be advantageous and that it is ready to take on the greater responsibility for the effectiveness of program improvement activities, it is time to identify other districts that might be interested in forming a consortium.

In reaching out to identify other districts that might be interested in forming a program improvement consortium, districts should consider building upon existing interdistrict connections. For example, many districts have been meeting together to share information and/or to plan ways to provide for the needs of special groups of students, such as special education students or bilingual education students. Similarly, many elementary schools have developed proficiency standards by working with the high schools that their students will attend. In other instances districts have become linked together by the services of a teacher center or by regular meetings with their county office staff members. In each of these instances, the schools and districts might consider expanding their current activities to include the program improvement activities of planning assistance, plan review, program development assistance, and program review.

While a district is identifying other districts interested in forming a program improvement consortium and discussing with them the benefits of working together to assist their schools as they work to improve their school programs, consortium development moves into its second phase—that of considering together such factors as the potential size of the consortium, the distances between districts, the particular mix of districts, and the resources available to them and the potential costs and benefits of becoming a consortium.

Forming a Consortium

Prior to making a commitment to form a consortium, districts interested in becoming consortium members will need to consider together the following factors which can either facilitate or inhibit the successful functioning of the consortium: size, distance, mix of districts, and potential costs.

Factors to Be Considered in Forming a Consortium

Size. The districts will need to think about the number of districts which could work closely and effectively together within a consortium. Currently operating consortia vary in size from three to 17 districts. A rule of thumb to use in considering the size of a consortium is that it should be:

- Large enough to encompass a sufficient diversity of schools and resources so that varying educational philosophies and practices of the schools can provide stimulation to the program improvement efforts of each district; and
- Small enough to ensure the capability of interaction with each school to provide needed assistance and to involve a large number of people at both the school and district levels in consortium activities.

Distance. The geographical arrangement of the districts in a consortium should make distances between them short enough to permit regular interaction among people from member districts. Schools will be unable to implement successfully the program improvement processes of planning, program development assistance, and program review if geographical distances restrict support or assistance activities to a "one-shot" endeavor.

Mix of districts. Other important considerations for potential consortium members are understanding the educational philosophy and practices of the other districts and the reservoir of resources that could be made available to the consortium as a whole. Districts should consider the compatibility of the educational philosophies and practices of potential member districts while at the same time recognizing the advantages of combining a diversity of ideas and practices. Districts should ask themselves and each other questions such as:

- Would there be sufficient divergence among school programs and educational practices to enable school and district people to expand their thinking and enrich the process of program improvement?
- Would the districts have schools with similar programs or needs?
- Would there be a meaningful ethnic and racial balance to meet program staff and student needs?
- Would there be a sufficient number of secondary and elementary schools to permit articulation from preschool through grade twelve, as well as articulation and mutual assistance and support across grade levels?

In considering becoming consortium members, districts should compare known resources or resource needs with those of other districts. If each district has carefully reviewed past and current program improvement efforts and activities, the resources in its own district that could be shared with other districts as well as the resources needed by the schools within each district should be evident. It is important to note that the term resources includes schools that have been particularly successful in developing quality programs, or program elements, teachers or groups of teachers with particular talents or skills, the talents and skills of parents or parent groups, as well as institutional and personnel resources of each district office, county offices, local colleges and universities, and other agencies within the local area of the districts. For example, a district with an increasing number of limited- and non-English-speaking students could benefit from knowing how a neighboring district developed and implemented its program designed to meet the needs of its LEP youngsters.

Potential costs. In determining the potential costs of the planned activities of the consortium, member districts should consider first the extent to which the responsibilities for carrying out those activities overlap or are consistent with responsibilities already carried by the district or school personnel within each district in which consortium activities may be a means for achieving the goals of existing activities. A critical step for consortium members is to recognize that the planned services to schools can come as the result of a redefinition of some responsibilities or reconceptualization of what needs to be done, rather than as additional tasks.

The number of person days expected to be needed to carry out the work of the consortium will vary with the range of activities the consortium plans to under-

take. Districts should estimate the number of person days needed to carry out the possible consortium activities by relating that need to the need of services to the schools within their own district. Some consortia have allotted people time to consortium activities based on the enrollment within their district; others have used the number of consolidated application schools within the district or the number of school plans and/or programs to be reviewed as the basis for determining how many person days to allocate to the consortium pool.

When estimating the cost of consortium activities, districts should balance that cost against the benefits from increasing the effectiveness of the school programs.

The State Department of Education provides fiscal support to consortia to help them carry out their planned activities. During the 1979-80 school year, this fiscal support amounts to the equivalent of $50 for each school receiving School Improvement, ESEA Title I, and/or State Compensatory Education funding, plus $400 for each secondary school scheduled to receive a program review. These funds may be used by the consortia in any way necessary for successful implementation of the activities described in the consortium agreement.

Some of the costs of consortium activities may be supported by centralized services funds or funds that have been allocated by schools for staff development. For example, the involvement of district staff in the routine functioning and selected activities of the consortium should be considered as a part of their job of providing the stimulation and resources for continuing program improvement efforts in the schools within the district. The involvement of school-level people in the activities of the consortium should be recognized as professional development for those people, which in turn will be of benefit to the total school staff.

Steps in Forming a Consortium

Once districts have decided that consortium membership would be beneficial for their schools and that they are ready to take on consortium responsibilities, and once they have identified other districts equally interested in forming a consortium, what happens next? This section describes the basic steps in forming a consortium, which are:

1. Develop an understanding of and commitment to the concept and the activities of consortia throughout each district. The development of an understanding and commitment to the consortium concept is of greatest importance, for without the understanding and commitment of the governing board and superintendent of each district, the consortium will not be successful in stimulating continued program improvement at each of the schools within the consortium and in supporting the activities of the consortium. The following suggestions may be helpful to districts ready to form a consortium:
   a. Understanding school improvement consortia and how they function:
      (1) Meet with people from existing consortia to find out what they are doing and how it works for them. (See Appendix A for a list of consortia.)
      (2) Meet with county office personnel to discuss the role the county office will play in supporting the consortium as well as the availability of resources in the county.
      (3) Contact the Consortia Support Services Unit of the Department of Education to set up a meeting between the staff members and representatives from the districts that are thinking about forming a consortium.
   b. Develop commitment to the concept of consortia:
      (1) Invite board members to visit schools to see the programs in action and to understand better what the program inprovement process can be.
      (2) Give governing board members current information on how the processes of planning, implementation, and evaluation are occurring in their schools. This knowledge can become a springboard from which they can make a decision concerning the benefits of joining a consortium.
      (3) Invite persons from other consortia to share information with the superintendent and board members about how their consortia have functioned and the benefits their districts and schools have derived from the consortia.
      (4) Explain to school principals, staff members, and school site councils/school advisory councils/bilingual education committees of the districts the purposes, goals, and activities of the consortium through written documents and/or in-service training meetings.
2. Contact the Consortium Support Services Unit to set up a meeting with the district superintendents and their staff representatives and members of the Executive Office of the Department of Education. The purpose of this meeting would be to clarify any questions or concerns the superintendents and their staff members may have

about program improvement consortia, how they function, the relationship of the consortia to the Department, and so forth. It also will enable a shared understanding among the superintendents of the districts involved of the purpose of *their* consortium.

3. Send a letter of intent to form a consortium to the Department of Education, Consortium Support Services Unit. The letter of intent is a signal to the Department that the districts named in the letter are ready to form a consortium. Upon receipt of the letter, a member of the Consortium Support Services Unit will be assigned to the group to assist the districts in determining consortium activities, to help in the development of the consortium agreement, and, in general, to act as a resource person for the group.
4. Develop the consortium agreement. Please see pages 8 and 9 of this guide for a discussion of this step.
5. Obtain approval of the agreement by the governing board of each school district of the consortium.
6. Submit the agreement, signed by each district representative, to the Department of Education for approval.

Starting Consortium Activities

Determining the Scope of Consortium Activities

The activities selected by a program improvement consortium will vary and should be planned to meet the needs of the schools and students within the consortium. Wherever a consortium decides to begin its activities, it should be kept in mind that the activities implemented should be part of the schools' program improvement process of planning, implementing, and evaluating. Planning, implementation, and evaluation are a cycle of activities that support each other, build on each other, and occur on an ongoing basis. Undertaking only one activity in isolation of others will, in the long run, inhibit overall program improvement. On the other hand districts should recognize the developmental nature of consortia and begin with those activities they can implement successfully in the first year and plan for phasing in additional activities as they are ready to take on additional responsibilities.

Consortium activities include:

1. Planning
   a. Assisting SSC, SAC, or BEC and other school planners understand basic planning procedures and how to organize for planning
   b. Assisting in the development and/or modification of the school's planned program and school plan
   c. Reviewing school plans and providing feedback to school planners
2. Implementation
   a. Assistance in translating plans into action through sharing of resources and the provision of joint staff development or curriculum development based on the needs of the schools
   b. Providing follow-up assistance based on the needs identified in plan and program review
   c. Sharing district master plan ideas and strategies
3. Evaluation
   a. Assisting schools in making self-assessments of how well their programs are working
   b. Conducting program reviews
   c. Sharing successful ongoing planning and evaluation procedures

Where a consortium begins in the program improvement cycle depends upon what member districts have determined to be their needs and the needs of their schools, their resources and the resources of their schools, and their readiness to accept responsibility for one or more school improvement activities.

In deciding what activities to undertake:

- Ideas can be generated from the needs assessment conducted by each district prior to the formation of the consortium. Discussion of the needs assessment should involve administrators, program directors, curriculum specialists, and evaluators at the district level, school site council members, school district advisory councils, and bilingual education committee members, school staffs and students at the school level.
- The district master plans of each participating district should be reviewed to determine what strategies designed for district support to school programs could be carried out through the consortium activities.
- Ideas can come from joint analyses of school plan reviews, school self-assessments, program review reports, program evaluations (including student achievement data), staff development needs assessments and evaluations, and district and school advisory committee and/or school site council minutes.
- Ideas could be generated from joint discussions among leaders at the schools and districts of available resources and the use of those resources.

In determining their activities, members of consortia should begin with those activities with which they are most comfortable, taking care to undertake those which can be successfully implemented while planning when and how other program improvement activities will be added. It should be the intent of all those involved in program improvement to implement over a period of time each of the activities cited above.

After deciding where to enter the program improvement cycle—that is, what activities to undertake first—the consortium's next major decision is how to carry out those activities in relation to the needs of the schools in the consortium. A steering committee, as described in the following section, can play a major role in making that decision.

Deciding How the Districts in the Consortium Will Work Together

Since consortia vary in size, composition, and location of districts as well as in the goals and activities

selected, the ways in which consortia function also vary. Generally, each district assigns on an annual basis one or two people, such as the assistant superintendent for instructional services or the director of curriculum and/or the consolidated programs director, as the district representatives to the consortium. These people form the steering committee of the consortium. From the membership of the steering committee, one person is designated as contact person with the State Department of Education.

Each steering committee establishes its own way of working, such as times and frequency of meetings, methods of communication among member districts, and roles and responsibilities of individual members. The definition of roles and assignment of responsibilities is dependent on the goals of the consortium and the kinds of activities it undertakes.

The primary tasks of the steering committee are:

- To plan for and direct the implementation of consortium program improvement activities
- To communicate consortium plans, implementation status of improvement activities, and the success or lack of success of the activities to other district personnel, to school staffs of each member district, and to the State Department of Education
- To evaluate consortium activities while those activities are proceeding as well as at the end of the year
- To modify activities, as necessary, based on evaluation findings

The degree of planning engaged in by consortia ranges from informal discussion-type planning to the development of very specific written plans as to how the consortium is to function. In either case it is essential that everyone knows what is to be done and how, who is responsible, and so forth. How a consortium goes about planning, how formal the process is, and the scope or completeness of the plans are matters of choice by the consortium.

Knowledge of the success or effectiveness of consortium activities is important for both the member districts of the consortium and for the State Department of Education. Evaluation procedures should be designed to permit mid-course changes, as necessary, as well as to determine the effectiveness of the activities as a whole. Such evaluation procedures should be identified at the same time as the steering committee members are planning consortium activities. Evaluative feedback from school staffs and district personnel is essential.

Probably the greatest potential impediment to successful consortia functioning is lack of communication about consortium activities between the district office staff and their schools and between the district's representative to the steering committee and other members of the district office staff. While determining how the consortium will function, steering committee members should give particular thought to how they will keep the school and other district personnel involved in determining the goals and activities of the consortia and how the committee will receive input from the schools and districts about those goals and activities. Time spent in establishing and using communication channels that permit free-flowing communication within and among the districts at all levels will pay off in greater understanding of and commitment to consortia activities; hence, increasing the effectiveness of those activities and their benefits to schools.

Developing the Consortium Agreement

The consortium agreement reflects the decisions made by the districts in the consortium concerning the activities of the consortium and how they will be carried out. It serves as a vehicle for communication of those decisions within and between the member districts as well as the framework for implementing the decisions.

The consortium agreement is also the legal contractual document between the State Department of Education and the districts of the consortium. The agreement is developed by the representatives from each district who serve as the steering committee, with input from each district and assistance as needed from the Department of Education, county office personnel, and/or established consortia. While there is no required format, the agreement must include, at a minimum:

- The name of the consortium
- The names of participating districts and, if appropriate, offices of county superintendents of schools
- A description of planned consortium activities[1]
- Signatures of a representative of the school district governing board of each participating district or office of the county superintendent of schools
- Date of signing

Should the consortium decide to undertake additional activities after the agreement has been completed, an addendum to the agreement can be submitted to the Department of Education.

It is best to keep the initial agreement simple enough to be able to cover or act as an umbrella for the entire scope of activities a consortium plans to

[1] If the consortium plans to conduct program reviews, the agreement must meet the requirements of California Administrative Code, Title 5, sections 4070 and 4071. See Appendix B.

undertake. A consortium may wish to contact other consortia listed at the end of this document if samples of existing agreements are needed.

Please note that agreements must be renewed annually.

In developing the consortium agreement, a specific time line is an important factor in timely completion of the agreement. A suggested time line[2] is:

- Schedule meetings among consortia representatives to draft the agreement.
- Provide time for discussing within each district the preparation of the first draft of the agreement.
- Revise the first draft by using feedback from each district review.
- Allow time for a review by each district of the final draft; modify as necessary.
- Schedule time for each governing board to approve the final agreement.
- Allow time for submission of the final agreement to the Department of Education.

Consortium Support Services Unit members are available to assist consortia in the development of the consortium agreement.

[2] A more detailed time line may be found in Appendix C.

Supporting the Consortia

Support for program improvement consortia is available from many sources. General support can be found in local, state, or federally supported teacher centers; in local universities or colleges; in local, state, or federally sponsored service agencies within the consortium area. It is helpful to the schools within a consortium for the steering committee not only to list for its schools the potential support agencies in its area but also to establish contact with the agencies, to explain the purpose of the consortium, and to explore with the agencies how its services can best be used by the schools.

The roles of other educational agencies in supporting consortia—the offices of county superintendents of schools and the State Department of Education—are described below.

Role of Offices of County Superintendents

Although the consortium is based on an agreement among school districts, the office of the county superintendent of schools can play an extremely important role in consortium formation and successive activities. The role of the county superintendent's office is, in large part, dependent on the size of the population within the county and the number of the consortia within the county. If the county is populous and there are several consortia within it, county office staff may act most effectively as continuing resource and support people to the individual consortia as they carry out their activities. In addition, county office staff may provide an effective communication link among the consortia in the county, sharing what has worked well for the various consortia and what has been less successful and putting consortia in direct communication with each other.

When the county has a small population and has only one or two consortia, the county may serve as a direct participant in the consortium or consortia. In these instances the resources of the county are as readily available to the consortium as the resources of any member district.

In other counties, the county office may take part in the planned activities of some consortia but not in others within the county, because the decision of whom to involve is primarily that of the districts forming a consortium. But in all instances, the county office can be a support agency for consortia either directly, as described above, or indirectly by being part of the resources for the consortium.

Role of the State Department of Education

The State Department of Education plays several roles in relation to consortia: the roles of assisting, approving, supporting, and validating consortia activities.

Assisting. The Department of Education is committed to the concept of consortia for improving school programs and the promise it holds for every school seeking to improve the quality of the educational experiences of its students. The extent of this commitment is evidenced in part by the establishment of the Consortia Support Services Unit within the Department.

Members of the Consortia Support Services Unit are available to assist potential consortia members in forming a consortium, in developing an agreement, and in formalizing the procedures for conducting the activities of the consortium by:

- Providing information about how other groups of districts have established themselves as a consortium and how they have implemented their activities
- Putting districts in contact with established consortia
- Assisting in the development of the consortium agreement
- Providing technical assistance to consortia as they carry out their activities—such as information specific to planning and plan review, the criteria to be used in selecting schools for program reviews, assistance in scheduling program reviews, and so forth
- Arranging for training for consortia members in the program improvement activities of plan and program development and review

Approving. The Department has the responsibility of approving annually all newly formed and continuing program improvement consortia. It also has the responsibility for ensuring that such clustering of districts will be effective in fostering continuing program improvement in the schools of those districts. If the Department believes that a particular grouping of districts will not be able to stimulate continuing program improvement of the schools within those districts, it may withhold approval of the proposed consortium. Such a decision would be made only if it were clearly

evident to the Department that the degree of readiness of the districts involved to accept the responsibilities that accompany a program improvement consortium poses a serious risk to successful implementation of consortium activities.

Supporting. The supporting role played by Department staff members on behalf of the consortia includes:

- Keeping consortia abreast of departmental, State Board of Education, and legislative decisions that can affect how they or their schools function
- Acting as a resource person for the consortia within the Department—that is, identifying departmental resources that may be helpful to consortia
- Identifying the potential resources of people and places in the regions of the consortia

Validating. A key responsibility of the State Department of Education is to ensure statewide consistency in the execution of program improvement activities. One method used by the Department is the development of the forms and procedures to be used statewide in plan and program reviews. Another is to provide training in their use. In order to ensure that the program improvement activities within consortia are consistent with those in other districts and areas of the state, a process of validating consortia activities has been established. This process includes on-site validations of consortium activities during program review in which Department staff members join consortia review teams for the purpose of validating the review procedures as well as review findings. Validation of plan review procedures and findings is also a part of the validation process.

While the major purpose of these validation procedures is to ensure statewide consistency, another purpose is to determine the adequacy of the training of the consortium people performing the activity and to provide retraining as necessary. If the Department should find during the validation process that the findings of a plan or program review conducted by a consortium are incomplete or inaccurate, the Department may take corrective action, such as providing retraining for reviewers, providing direct assistance in future reviews, and/or reconducting the review.

Evaluation of the degree of success of consortium activities is essential to each consortium as well as to the Department of Education. For the purpose of reporting to its governing agencies (the State Board of Education and the California Legislature), it is necessary that the Department receive from each consortium an annual evaluation report describing the results of its activities. It would be helpful if these consortium evaluation reports were received in the Department before the first of September of each year.

Once each program improvement consortium has established contact with the various support agencies within its geographical area as well as its county office and the Consortia Support Services Unit within the Department of Education, it becomes the responsibility of the consortium to identify and utilize the assistance and supportive resources within those agencies that will enable the consortium to fulfill its purpose—that is, to support and assist each school within the consortium as it strives to develop and maintain a high quality program for each student.

Appendix A
School Improvement Consortia, 1980-81

Consortia, by County

Butte, Glenn, and Tehama Counties

ISHI Consortium
c/o Diane Wilkinson
Office of the Butte County Superintendent of Schools
1857 Bird St.
Oroville, CA 95965
(916) 534-4469

Member districts

Butte County:
- Chico Unified
- Gridley Union Elementary
- Oroville Union High
- Paradise Unified

Butte County Cooperative:
- Bangor Union Elementary
- Biggs Unified
- Durham Unified
- Feather Falls Union Elementary
- Golden Feather Union Elementary
- Gridley Union High
- Manzanita Elementary
- Palermo Union Elementary
- Pioneer Union Elementary
- Thermalito Union Elementary

Glenn County:
- Orland Cooperative
  - Orland Joint Union Elementary
  - Orland Joint Union High
- Willows Unified

Glenn County Cooperative:
- Capay Joint Union Elementary
- Hamilton Union Elementary
- Hamilton Union High
- Lake Elementary
- Plaza Elementary
- Princeton Joint Unified
- Stony Creek Joint Unified

Tehama County:
- Red Bluff Union Elementary

Corning Cooperative:
- Corning Union Elementary
- Corning Union High

Tehama County Cooperative:
- Antelope Elementary
- Bend Elementary
- Elkins Elementary
- Evergreen Union Elementary
- Flournoy Union Elementary
- Gerber Union Elementary
- Kirkwood Elementary
- Lassen View Union Elementary
- Los Molinos Unified
- Manton Joint Union Elementary
- Mineral Elementary
- Plum Valley Elementary
- Red Bluff Union High
- Reeds Creek Elementary
- Richfield Elementary

Consortia, by county	*Member districts*
Humboldt County	
Humboldt Consortium c/o Ron Flenner Office of the Humboldt County Superintendent of Schools 901 Myrtle Ave. Eureka, CA 95501 (707) 445-5411	Arcata Elementary Bridgeville Elementary Cuddeback Union Elementary Cutten Elementary Fieldbrook Elementary Fortuna Union Elementary Jacoby Creek Elementary McKinleyville Union Elementary Pacific Union Elementary Rio Dell Elementary Southern Humboldt Joint Unified
Los Angeles County	
Antelope Valley Consortium c/o George Turner Lancaster Elementary School District P.O. Box 1750 Lancaster, CA 93534 (805) 948-4661	Antelope Valley Union High Eastside Union Elementary Keppel Union Elementary Lancaster Elementary Palmdale Elementary Soledad-Agua Dulce Union Elementary Westside Cooperative: Hughes-Elizabeth Lakes Union Elementary Westside Union Elementary Wilsona Elementary
Azusa Consortium c/o Frank Lopes Azusa Unified School District P.O. Box 500 Azusa, CA 91702 (213) 967-6211	Azusa Unified Baldwin Park Unified Bassett Unified Bonita Unified Charter Oak Unified Claremont Unified Covina Valley Unified Walnut Valley Unified West Covina Unified
Beachfront Consortium c/o Virginia Gembica El Segundo Unified School District 641 Sheldon St. El Segundo, CA 90245 (213) 322-4500	El Segundo Unified Hermosa Beach City Elementary Manhattan Beach City Elementary Redondo Beach City Elementary South Bay Union High Torrance Unified Wiseburn Elementary
BL-ST Consortium c/o Tom Brierly South Pasadena Unified School District P.O. Box B South Pasadena, CA 91030 (213) 799-1104	Beverly Hills Unified La Canada Unified South Pasadena Unified Temple City Unified
Freeway Consortium c/o Keith Shattuck Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District 12820 S. Pioneer Blvd. Norwalk, CA 90650 (213) 868-0431	ABC Unified Downey Unified Hacienda-La Puente Unified Montebellllo Unified Norwalk-La Mirada Unified

Consortia, by county	*Member districts*
LA-MOD County Consortium c/o Vera Jashni Culver City Unified School District 4034 Irving Place Culver City, CA 90230 (213) 839-4361	Castaic Union Elementary Culver City Unified Glendale Unified Las Virgenes Unified Oak Park Unified (Ventura County) Newhall Elementary Santa Monica Unified Saugus Union Elementary Sulphur Springs Union Elementary William S. Hart Union High
San Gabriel Consortium c/o James DiPeso Mt. View Elementary School District 2850 N. Mt. View Rd. El Monte, CA 91732 (213) 575-2151	El Monte Elementary Mountain View Elementary Valle Lindo Elementary
Whittier Consortium c/o Sheila Wells Little Lake City Elementary School District 10515 S. Pioneer Blvd. Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670 (213) 868-8241	East Whittier City Elementary El Rancho Unified Little Lake City Elementary Los Nietos Elementary South Whittier Elementary Whittier City Elementary Whittier Union High Los Angeles County Office
Marin, Napa, and Sonoma Counties	
Wine Country Consortium c/o Bob Wells Napa Valley Unified School District 2425 Jefferson St. Napa, CA 94558 (707) 252-5514	Napa Valley Unified Novato Unified Santa Rosa Elementary Santa Rosa High
Monterey County	
Monterey County Consortium c/o Heloise Wright Office of the Monterey County Superintendent of Schools P.O. Box 80851 Salinas, CA 93912 (408) 424-0654	Alisal Union Elementary Carmel Unified King City Joint Union High Monterey Peninsula Unified North Monterey County Unified Pacific Grove Unified Salinas Union High Santa Rita Union Elementary Washington Union Elementary Monterey County Office Cooperative: Bradley Union Elementary Chualar Union Elementary Gonzales Union Elementary Gonzales Union High King City Union Elementary Mission Union Elementary San Antonio Union Elementary San Ardo Union Elementary San Lucas Union Elementary Soledad Union Elementary

Consortia, by county	*Member districts*
Orange County	
North Orange County Consortium c/o Louise Glenning Ocean View Elementary School District 16940 B St. Huntington Beach, CA 92647 (714) 847-2551	Los Alamitos Elementary Ocean View Elementary Placentia Unified
Orange Coast Consortium c/o Mary King Orange Unified School District 370 N. Glassell St. Orange, CA 92666 (714) 997-6380	Capistrano Unified Irvine Unified Laguna Beach Unified Orange Unified Saddleback Valley Unified
Riverside County	
Riverside County Consortium c/o Yolanda Benitez Office of the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools P.O. Box 868 Riverside, CA 92502 (714) 787-2901	Beaumont Unified Elsinore Union Elementary Elsinore Union High Romoland Elementary San Jacinto Unified Riverside County Schools Office
San Bernardino County	
COPE Consortium c/o Gail Houghton Chaffey Joint Union High School District 211 W. 5th St. Ontario, CA 91762 (714) 988-8511	Alta Loma Elementary Bear Valley Unified Chaffey Joint Union High Cucamonga Elementary Redlands Unified San Bernardino County Schools Office
San Diego County	
Central Consortium c/o Judy James Santee Elementary School District P.O. Box 220 Santee, CA 92071 (714) 448-2510	Cajon Valley Union Elementary Chula Vista City Elementary Escondido Union Elementary La Mesa-Spring Valley Elementary Santee Elementary
Heartland Hills Consortium c/o Judy Kuhlman Jamul-Las Flores Union Elementary School District 14581 Lyons Valley Rd. Jamul, CA 92035 (714) 460-3770	Alpine Union Elementary Jamul-Las Flores Union Elementary Lakeside Union Elementary Lemon Grove Elementary Ramona Unified
North San Diego County Consortium c/o Peggy Slocum Vista Unified School District 1234 Arcadia Ave. Vista, CA 92083 (714) 726-2170	Oceanside City Unified Poway Unified Vista Unified

Consortia, by county	*Member districts*
San Diego Coastal Consortium c/o Barbara Berrier Encinitas Union Elementary School District 189 Union St. Encinitas, CA 92024 (714) 753-1152	Cardiff Elementary Coronado Unified Encinitas Union Elementary Solana Beach Elementary
Santa Barbara County	
Santa Barbara Consortium c/o Ray Dutchover Office of the Santa Barbara County Superintendent of Schools P.O. Box 6307 Santa Barbara, CA 93111 (805) 964-4711	Goleta Union Elementary Guadalupe Union Lompoc Unified Orcutt Union Santa Barbara Elementary Santa Barbara High Santa Maria Elementary Santa Maria Joint Union High Santa Barbara County Schools Office
Santa Clara County	
Silicon Valley Consortium c/o Ruth Malen Sunnyvale Elementary School District P.O. Box 217 Sunnyvale, CA 94086 (408) 736-4981	Cupertino Union Elementary Fremont Union High Loma Prieta Elementary Santa Clara Unified Sunnyvale Elementary
South Santa Clara County Consortium c/o Chuck Loyd Oak Grove Elementary School District 6578 Santa Teresa Blvd. San Jose, CA 95119 (408) 227-8300	Berryessa Elementary Evergreen Elementary Morgan Hill Unified Oak Grove Elementary
West Valley Consortium c/o Mike Demko Union Elementary School District 5175 Union Ave. San Jose, CA 95124 (408) 377-8010	Cambrian Elementary Campbell Union Elementary Moreland Elementary Saratoga Union Elementary Union Elementary
Sonoma County	
Redwood Country Consortium c/o Jack Gyves Petaluma City Schools 11 Fifth Street Petaluma, CA 94952 (707) 762-6601	Cotati-Rohnert Park Unified Healdsburg Union Elementary Healdsburg Union High Petaluma City Elementary Petaluma Joint Union High
Alameda County	
South Alameda County Consortium c/o Dorothy Lucas New Haven Unified 34200 Alvarado-Niles Road Union City, CA 94587 (415) 471-1100	Castro Valley Unified New Haven Unified Newark Unified San Leandro Unified San Lorenzo Unified

Appendix B

Sample Time Line for Forming a School Improvement Consortium

Model Process for 1980-81 and Subsequent Years

Once a district determines that it wishes to participate in a program improvement consortium, certain steps should be taken. A suggested model process for the development of a consortium during 1980-81 and subsequent years follows:

Proposed time line	*Proposed activities*
1-2 months	1. Interested district personnel should communicate within their district a desire to participate in a consortium with one or more districts or offices of county superintendents of schools.
1-2 months	2. The district personnel should gather data and information from within the district for determining the benefits of participation in a program improvement consortium. This process should involve school site personnel, school site councils, school advisory councils, bilingual education committees, parents, and secondary students.
2-3 months	3. Upon agreement by the local administration, the district should contact another district, districts, or county offices for joint participation.
1-2 months	4. The potential consortium should inform by letter the Consortium Support Unit of the State Department of Education of its intent to form a consortium. The letter of intent should include (1) the names of the districts and county offices, as appropriate, that intend to participate in the consortium; and (2) the name, address, telephone number, and signature of a district or county office contact person.
1 month	5. The Consortium Support Unit manager will assign a consultant as a resource person to the districts in the development of the consortium agreement.
2-3 months	6. An agreement must be developed that describes the activities to be undertaken and whether a program review is to be one of the consortium activities that meets the requirements of Section 4070 of the California Administrative Code, Title 5.
2-3 months	7. The proposed agreement must be approved by the governing board of each participating district.
1-2 months	8. A copy of the agreement must be submitted to the Consortium Support Unit for transmittal to the Deputy Superintendent for Programs and the State Board of Education.
1- month	9. The response of the State Board of Education will be communicated to the consortium.
	10. A consortium agreement must be submitted annually.

Appendix C

California Administrative Code, Title 5, Sections 4070 and 4071

Section 4070 of Title 5, California Administrative Code, as amended, reads as follows:

4070. PROGRAM REVIEWS CONDUCTED BY CONSORTIA. (a) To be eligible for annual State Board of Education approval, a proposal for program reviews to be conducted through a consortium, pursuant to Education Code Section 52035(g), shall provide that:

(1) At a minimum all schools in those categories that are systematically reviewed by the State Department of Education will be reviewed by the cooperating districts;

(2) Instrumentation and procedures used will be the same as those used by the State Department of Education;

(3) A majority of program review team members will be from educational agencies other than the district in which the review is being conducted;

(4) The districts involved have established an agreement approved by each governing board that, at a minimum, specifies the procedures for: conducting program reviews; monitoring and evaluating the review process; and

(5) Shall describe how the costs associated with the review process will be covered.

Section 4071 of Title 5, California Administrative Code, as amended, reads as follows:

4071. MONITORING OF CONSORTIA ACTIVITIES AND TRAINING OF REVIEW TEAM MEMBERS. The Department of Education shall provide for ongoing review of the program reviews conducted by consortia and shall provide necessary training for all program review team members.

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